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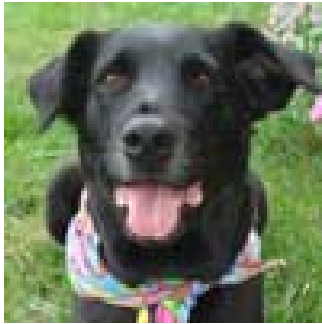
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A "Paws" from Studying

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Finals week is a stressful time for college students, and the University of Dayton is offering a variety of stress-busting activities — and advice — to ease anxiety for students, ranging from pizza to puppies to peppermints.

Three dogs from the Miami Valley Pet Therapy Association will be joining traditional activities usually offered during finals week such as free food, coffee, soda and chair massages. Mazy, Willow or Fitzy will be in the Roesch Library from 11 a.m. to noon and 4-5 p.m. Monday, Dec. 10, and Tuesday, Dec. 11, for petting and playing.

Therapy dogs have made appearances at college campuses across the nation. Harvard Law School and Yale Medical School each have puppies that can be "checked out" year-round from the library for playtime with students. Other universities, such as Denison University and Emory University, have similar finals week therapy dog events.

It's the first time the library has offered what it's billing as a "paws" to de-stress, said Katy Kelly, communications and outreach librarian, who said initial response from students and even faculty has been terrific.

In addition to the therapy dogs, in cooperation with the student organization Dayton2Daytona, the library is hosting a 10-minute Dance Party around the lobby Christmas tree just before midnight Sunday, Dec. 9. The first 100 students will get glow sticks in Flyer red and blue, and everyone will get a chance to shake off the stress and get the blood pumping.

Students are invited to tweet @dayton2daytona with song requests; the organization will compile a set list for the 10-minute dance bash.

Therapy dogs and dance programs are fun ways to de-stress, according to Linda Rodgers, counselor for the University of Dayton Counseling Center who teaches a workshop on test anxiety. She says one of the best ways for students to combat test anxiety is to create a coping structure to support their bodies as well as their minds.

"Develop a schedule and set a time to study," she said. "It's a good strategy to take mini-breaks and I'm always an advocate for exercise. Find a way to put that in as well."

Other tips from Rodgers:

- Get enough rest the night before. Don't do all-nighters.
- Know when to cut the studying off for rest, exercise or a relaxation break.
- Take advantage of fun relaxation breaks many schools offer — chair massages, dance breaks, therapy dogs.
- Make sure you eat breakfast.

And don't underestimate the smell and taste of success.

"Take a piece of peppermint candy and suck on it during the test," Rodgers said. "It's an interesting trick, but it works. Peppermint can slow you down a bit and relax you."

For more on Roesch Library activities, contact Katy Kelly, communications and outreach librarian, at kkelly2@udayton.edu (url: <mailto:kkelly2@udayton.edu>) or 937-229-4274.